



Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District
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MEDIA RELEASE

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**LUNG ASSOCIATION BESTOWS
TOP HONOR TO MOJAVE DESERT AQMD**

Victorville – The Inland Counties Chapter of the American Lung Association has presented its Clean Air Award to the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District for becoming the first government agency in the High Desert to install and operate a photovoltaic solar power system, and for educating the community about the environmental benefits of solar power. The award was presented in San Bernardino on May 18 during a ceremony that featured Senator Nell Soto (D-Pomona) as the keynote speaker.

The MDAQMD's net-metering solar power system has been fulfilling more than 45% of the District's energy needs since July of 2004. By using the sun to create its own energy, the MDAQMD will help spare the environment of an estimated 163,158 lbs. of carbon dioxide – a greenhouse gas – per year, and 52 lbs. of nitrogen oxides – a primary component of ozone. The MDAQMD's rooftop solar system generates sufficient energy to power 18 homes, while providing a reliable and economically sound source of renewable energy for the District. Since installing the system last summer, the MDAQMD has saved more than \$10,000 on its electrical bills, compared to last year during the same time period.

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In an effort to educate the community about the environmental benefits of solar power, the MDAQMD launched its onsite Clean Power Education Center in September of 2004. The center features a working model of the District's building powered by miniature solar panels, plus a kiosk featuring real-time data which quantifies the amount of energy being produced, and pollutants being reduced via the solar system. Field trips to the center are now being offered to local schools, as are tours for interested members of the business community. Future plans for the Center call for the installation of displays spotlighting other renewable energy sources, such as wind and hydroelectric power.

"We are honored to be recognized for our environmental stewardship," stated Chuck Fryxell, Air Pollution Control Officer for the MDAQMD. "We hope that other agencies and businesses will follow our lead and explore the use of renewable energy sources at their facilities."

The MDAQMD was one of seven San Bernardino county entities to be recognized for making a significant impact on air quality in the Inland Empire. Other award recipients included OmniTrans and the City of Perris.

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